

THE GATHERING OF THE INLAND VALLEY

RESTORATION PART IV: STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH CHAPTER 4

Review

A. Israel were taken into exile (captivity) by the Babylonians because of sin. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the walls, burnt down the gates, tore down the alters, plundered the gold, silver, and utensils, then left Jerusalem in ruins.

B. Israelites were freed during Persian rule to return to their homeland to rebuild the Temple.

C. Building program of the Temple stopped short because they focused on their own needs first leaving them in sustained poverty so God sent Ezra and two prophets, Zechariah & Haggai, to lead the people to finish the rebuilding of the Temple.

D. Ezra was unable to finish the restoration of the wall and the gates to fortify Jerusalem due to political conspiracy and opposition.

E. Much later Nehemiah learns of the dire situation of his homeland and is grieved in his spirit by the report.

F. Nehemiah's passion gives him a vision for the welfare of God's people. Nehemiah was one man who was seeking the welfare of God's people. Welfare-health, prosperity, peace.

G. Aware of the political opposition, Nehemiah is not only sent by the King of Persia to finish the work, but because of favor is empowered by the king of Persia with letters of authority to complete the work.

F. There must be a passion for restoration. Must be a desire for change. Must be an understanding that things don't have to stay the way that they are.

GOD IS AFTER QUALITY RATHER THAN QUANTITY

I. WAIT FOR ENEMY TO OVERPLAY HIS HAND-vv.1-3

A. Our adversary the devil lives by fear and not by faith. The obstacles and opposition mounted against us and all works of God are motivated from a place of fear. The enemy is furious because he is afraid.

B. What troubles the enemy is when you make up your mind there is going to be refortification, a restoration of spiritual places, spiritual disciplines, and you are not expecting it to take forever.

C. By learning to still our mind and emotions through faith in Christ we are able to discern the weak underbelly of the enemy's position, and mount a counter attack.

(v.2) 1. *What are they doing?* Our godly activity gets the enemies attention; a cause for his concern to begin to question and fear strikes his heart

2. *Are they going to restore it for themselves?* Afraid he will no longer be granted free access to do as he pleases. Godly activity limits Satan's authority.

3. *Can they offer sacrifices?* Fear of true worship being restored to Jehovah. True praise and worship silences the enemy.

4. *Can they finish in a day?* Fear of loss. Expect God to move swiftly on your behalf.

5. *Can they revive the stones from the dusty rubble, even the burned ones?* Fear of works being reversed. Loss of status and posterity. God takes that which is burnt down and broken and brings it back to life.

D. The Christian fights fear with faith while the devil fights fear with fear

Ephesians 3:12 In Christ we can come before God with freedom and without fear. We can do this through faith in Christ

2 Timothy 2:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

1 John 4:8 Where God's love is, there is no fear, because God's perfect love drives out fear. It is punishment that makes a person fear, so love is not made perfect in the person who fears.

II. BECOME MILITANT IN YOUR PRAYER LIFE AND PROTECT YOUR GATES WITH PRAISE-vv.4-5

A. Prayer overcomes demoralization and breaks the opposing spirit. Don't be soft when dealing with spiritual forces of darkness in high places. Your mouth must be lethal.

Revelation 1:16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

B. Gates are the entry and exit points.

Psalm 8:2 (NIV) Through the praise of children (out of the mouth of children) and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.

2 Chronicles 31:2 ...to minister, and to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the LORD.

Psalm 9:14 That I may show forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

C. God will restore what the enemy has stolen? God is always looking for the burnt stones to build with.
(From I. C. 5.)

1. Will they revive? Bring back to life?

Luke 19:40 But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

1 Peter 2:5 You also are like living stones, so let yourselves be used to build a spiritual temple—to be holy priests who offer spiritual sacrifices to God. He will accept those sacrifices through Jesus Christ. ⁶ The Scripture says:

Isaiah 28:16 "I will put a stone in the ground in Jerusalem. Everything will be built on this important and precious rock. Anyone who trusts in him will never be disappointed."

III. HAVE A MIND AND HEART TO WORK AND FINISH THE WORK-vv.6,14

A. Take courage all good works are opposed by the enemy's plots and schemes, this is why you must know the work is good (righteous) and worth doing.

B. We must know that the work is good.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

C. When you have a mind to work you don't get tired or weary in doing good.

D. Time to fight to the finish